



# Social media marketing plan for Evento

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Bachelor's Thesis  
Degree Programme in  
Hospitality, Tourism and  
Experience Management  
2020



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<b>Degree programme</b> Bachelor of Hospitality, Tourism and Experience Management	
<b>Report/thesis title</b> Social media marketing plan for Evento	<b>Number of pages and appendix pages</b> 43 + 3
<p>This is a product-based thesis for Evento, a magazine for event professionals in Finland. The final product is a social media marketing plan for the commissioning party concentrating especially on raising the customer engagement and quality of marketing. The plan gives a strategy model for social media marketing and specific guidelines how to execute it. The plan focuses on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn marketing.</p> <p>The aim of this thesis is to create a social media plan and guidelines for building and managing a successful social media presence. The main objective is to raise customer engagement of the commissioning party's social media channels. This means enriching the quality of the content, building consistency and interaction with the target audience. Other objectives of the final product are to raise the number of followers, to build brand awareness through social media and this way increase sales as well.</p> <p>In the theoretical part the author concentrates on brand elements, social media marketing strategies, customer engagement and B2B marketing. The author uses qualitative method by interviewing the business director of the commissioning party to have a better understanding of the company's social media marketing situation. The author decided this topic because she works as a digital marketer and event coordinator as a freelancer. She is also part of Evento's digital marketing team, and this way acknowledged a need for a social media marketing plan.</p> <p>In the empirical part the author analyses the whole project. A situation analysis, target audiences, scheduling and result measurement will be discussed in the end. The empirical part supports the final product with a marketing schedule model, engagement rate analysis and other important elements. The author will also describe the implementation of part of the final product. After implementing the plan, Evento's social media presence has improved; the social media pages have gained more interaction and engagement from the followers and the Instagram feed looks on-brand. In the end of this thesis the author discusses further development ideas and evaluates the whole thesis process.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Social media marketing, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, customer engagement, marketing plan	

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# **1 Introduction**

Marketing has gone through big changes on the 20th century, as social media has taken over the world. New approaches have appeared making marketing more social and interactive. To mention a few social media, internet, smart phones and interactive TV have allowed marketers to target their message more specifically and effectively to the right target groups. Technology has allowed marketing to be more personal and interactive. Customers have also become more aware and more demanding. People want to interact, belong and be social in social media, it is coded into our DNA (Ryan & Jones 2012, 154). By creating content that satisfies the customer and that the customer really wants to see more and spend time with, we create strong customer relationships and build engagement. The best way to win in social media is to forget the old-school commercial product promoting, and begin to raise consumer engagement by finding out what consumers are interested in and then providing them useful and informative content. (Ryan & Jones 2016, 155.)

This thesis is made for commissioning party Evento, a print magazine for event and experience professionals. The final product is a two-page social media marketing strategy, concentrating on raising engagement with consumers. This introduction includes information of the commissioning party, aims and objectives of this thesis, risk analysis and key terms. In the theoretical part key concepts of social media marketing are presented as well as how to create a social media marketing strategy. After this, the process of creating the final product is described, reflecting on the subjects discussed on the theoretical part. A small implementation of the marketing plan is executed and analysed in the empirical part. At the end of the thesis the author analyses the final product and results. Sources and appendices are found in the end of the thesis.

## **1.1 The commissioning party**

Evento is a magazine for event professionals in Finland. It is published six times a year with different themed issues, from work wellbeing to creating experiences. Evento -magazine is a part of Omnipress Oy, Mediatulo Keskisuomalainen corporation (Omnipress 2019). Evento's target audience consists of assistants, CEOs, marketing bosses and HR managers. Evento offers news, working life tips, new inventions and companies of the industry. On top of the print magazine, Evento is a multi-channel media (print, digital, social media, events). (Evento 2019.)

Evento Awards is Evento's yearly award-event for event professionals, where industry's top companies and professionals are being acknowledged for their work. People suggest possible finalists for receiving the Evento Awards prize to the 15 different categories (for example best business event and best performer of the year). Prizes are given in the festive occasion where event professionals get to also network, mingle and come together to one place. (Evento Awards 2019.) Evento organizes also other events, such as Evento Date, where professionals get to hear inspirational speakers of the industry and to network with each other. Evento Workshops were held five times in 2019 with different themes (organizing parties, human resources, leading, experimental marketing etc). (Evento 2019.)

Evento has quality content in the print magazine, and most of its' readers are using Facebook, Instagram or both. These social media channels create a great opportunity for Evento to increase their audience and build their customer engagement by being present online. The author does digital marketing and event productions as a freelancer for Finnish companies. She started to do digital marketing for Evento in September 2018 and since then has been part of planning and building their social media presence.

## **1.2 Aim and objectives**

The commissioning party has active Facebook and Instagram pages and the website is up to date. To raise customer engagement and loyalty the author acknowledged a need for a specific plan for their social media marketing. The website would also need more traffic. As there are multiple employees from Evento's office involved with their social media, it is crucial to have a guidebook for the team; when, how, who, what time and how often to post. This way the marketing is consistent, professional and on-brand. The final product aims to give a clear base for consistent social media marketing. Also, when new employees are hired to the company, the guidebook saves time and offers an understanding of their social media marketing processes as an entity. The aim of this thesis is to create an effective marketing plan for Evento -magazine, that they can use to produce their social media marketing. The objectives of the final product are to:

- increase the customer engagement of Evento's Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn pages
- raise the number of likes, comments and followers of the social media pages
- make the marketing more consistent, on-brand and planned
- get more traffic to the Evento -website

The final product is presented in the end of this thesis. The author will also analyse the implementation of the plan, as she will implement some of the plan's actions.

### **1.3 Key concepts**

#### **Marketing**

“Marketing is managing profitable customer relationships. The twofold goal of marketing is to attract new customers by promising superior value and to keep and grow current customers by delivering satisfaction” (Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 29).

#### **Social media**

“Social media is the facilitation of interactive, connected, marketing purposes at organisational, peer-to-peer and personal levels” (Hanlon 2019, 273).

#### **Social media marketing**

“The aspect of digital marketing that focuses on understanding and engaging the buyer persona through social media use. Social media marketing involves activity on a consciously selected combination of social media networks that are most relevant to your buyer persona” (Heinze & al. 2017, 25).

#### **Customer engagement**

“Customer engagement (CE) is a psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, cocreative customer experiences with a focal agent/object (e.g., a brand) in focal service relationships” (Brodie & al. 2011, 261).

#### **Content marketing**

“A strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly-defined audience – and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action” (Content Marketing Institute 2019).

## 2 Social media marketing

In this chapter the author presents what is social media about, who uses it and why and three popular social media channels, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram. The author explains the basic features of Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, algorithms and paid advertising. In the end of this chapter target audience and segmenting will be explained.

### 2.1 Marketing process

Marketing has evolved from “telling and selling” to more customer-satisfying approaches. Selling is one part of the marketing mix, but there are plenty of other marketing ways as well. Building engagement and long-lasting customer relationships can be done by delivering customer value. (Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 29.)

The evolution of digital marketing started in 1971, when first email was sent. After that we have come a long way with new innovations coming to the market, such as internet, social networks and search engines. (Hanlon 2019, 53.) Marketing has taken a big leap to digitalisation, and digital natives and millennials are choosing YouTube over TV and WhatsApp over letters (Hanlon 2019, 11). The marketing process has yet remained quite the same – giving the customer extra value and delight.

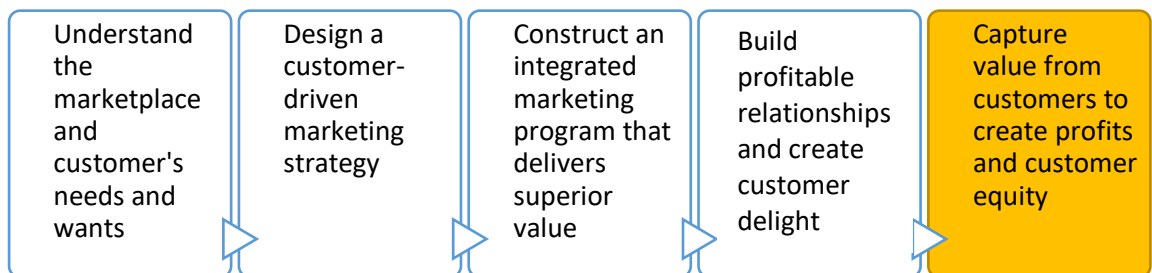


Figure 1. The Marketing Process: Creating and Capturing Customer Value (adapted from Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 31)

The above figure 1 a simple model of the marketing process, basically marketing in a nutshell. The first four steps are about understanding the markets and the customer, creating value and building relationships with customers. In return, by creating extra value for the customers, we get back from them in form of customer engagement, sales and profits. It is all about the customer and their needs. (Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 31.)



## **2.2 Social media for businesses**

People want to belong and interact with each other, whether it is online or offline. The rules of social media are dictated by consumers, not companies, so it may seem even scary for businesses to jump into social media. In the end social media is just about people connecting, talking and sharing. The same goes with marketing – understanding humans and communicating with them in the right way. People are already talking online about companies, industries and brands, so also companies should join the conversation, listen and engage with these online communities. (Ryan & Jones 2012, 154-155.) Organizations have realized the power of social media as a marketing channel, as social media channels are one of the most popular platforms for online interaction. Channels like Facebook and Instagram connect people, but also people and organizations. Companies can tell their story and show their human side on social media, and this way gain engagement from their customers. (Heinze & al. 2017, 190.) Social media offers plenty of benefits that other medias can not provide. Social media can be entertaining, information providing, communicating, collaborating and brand recognition gaining media, that brings customer value and attracts new potential customers. (Hanlon 2019, 277.)

Planning of social media actions is mandatory to retain the posts consistent. A marketing plan with clear guidelines and rules saves time and other resources. A good plan starts from making a strategy, setting the goals and knowing the audience. After this, potential tactics can be scheduled, and data monitored. Setting up a marketing plan can seem fast and easy, but it requires a good team, resources and creativity. (Hanlon 2019, 250-251.)

Making social media marketing strategy can fail. Signals of failure of the strategy are for example lack of operational plan, lack of skilled staff, lack of originality or lack of agility. As digital marketing is a rapidly changing field, staff should be learning continuously and understanding social media marketing in a holistic way. Naturally the organization has a big responsibility with this, offering enough time and tools (trainings etc.) to enable the constant learning. (Heinze & al. 2017, 28.)

Companies easily take ideas from other business accounts, but then there is always a risk of losing originality. Instagram has over 25 million business accounts, so to stand out companies should come up with something unique and different from others. It is not an easy task, but with right resources, creativity and good knowledge of the company's user persona, it is possible. Buyer personas and technologies change and develop continuously as well. This requires even more time and resources for companies to keep up with the change and keeping the content interesting for the customers. (Heinze & al. 2017, 28.)

### **2.3 Facebook for businesses**

Nowadays Facebook is the king of social media platforms with over two billion users and ca. 1,5 billion daily users. It was also one of the first channels that really started the social media revolution. Companies can set up a business page, where company's news, photos, videos and events can be posted. On Facebook customers can easily interact with the company with sharing, liking and commenting the public posts. The average Facebook user likes approximately 50 business pages, so it really offers a great platform to share content. (Kerpen 2019, 253-254.)

According to Kerpen (2019, 260) videos, GIFs, photos, links with images and interactive applications (for example quizzes) are the most engaging Facebook posts. Especially videos work very well on Facebook, and Facebook's algorithms show that by raising the video higher on user's news feed and giving it more organic reach. When posting videos on Facebook as a company, companies should pay more attention to the content of the video, not the production quality. Most of Facebook's users check social media channels on mobile phones and not on computers. Videos are also a fun way to show company's staff, everyday office life and personality. One thing to remember is that over 75 % of Facebook videos are watched without sounds. This means you can get better results of sharing videos, when you make subtitles to them. (Kerpen 2019, 256.)

Facebook also launched the Facebook Live tool in 2016, for its users to broadcast live video to all of Facebook's users. This is effective at events, sharing news or just wanting to really interact with the users. Facebook users can directly comment or react with hearts or smileys to the live video. (Kerpen 2019, 256.)

### **2.4 Instagram for businesses**

Instagram is a visual social media platform launched in October 2010, that allows its users to share images and videos and connect with friends as well as companies (Brunner 2016). Over a billion people use it monthly and it is closely linked with Facebook, as it was bought by Facebook in 2012. (Facebook 2019.)

Organizations can make a business Instagram profile, and share their news, services and other relevant posts to their feed. Rather than trying to sell products and services, on Instagram companies should share the solution and value they provide to their customers. As Instagram is a visual platform, this should be done in a beautiful way, with quality-photos or videos. Tips, how-to's, teasers, behind the scenes -material, company culture and value sharing posts work on Instagram. Hashtags should be used on posts to gain more

visibility. Hashtags should be relevant to the organization and the post. Instagram is very powerful for collaborations and sharing other's content, so mentioning and tagging other profiles should be done always when possible. Only by testing companies can find the best ways to benefit from Instagram, so regular result measuring is crucial. Instagram has even their own Instagram Analytics for business profiles, so the main results can be easily found there. (Baranovska 15 January 2019.)

Interaction is important for Instagram's business profiles, because of the algorithm. The algorithm recognizes if a profile is interacting (commenting, liking, sharing) with another profile and shows this profile's posts higher on the news feed. Therefore, it is crucial for business profiles to be social on Instagram. Otherwise quality-posts can drown on the feed. (Driver 2019.)

Instagram's users are able to post on their feed and use the Story, Zoom or Live tools. Snapchat was the first platform for "in-the-moment" video or photo sharing, where the content can only be seen once by the follower. Now Instagram has its Stories -tool as well, where the content can be seen only for 24 hours and after that it disappears. This allows profiles to interact with followers much more actively than before, and the feed doesn't get piled up with too many posts. Instagram Stories can be used more often and in more creative ways, for example creating a diary kind of slideshow of the user's day. (Coles 2018, 124.) Instagram Stories is a pleasant feature for its users, because it makes sense to people and is easy to watch. Like normal stories, Instagram Stories has a beginning, middle, and end, so this makes it easy for the followers to watch and dig into. (Myers 2019.)

Efficient content ideas (Boogaard 12 February 2019) for Instagram Stories are:

- quizzes
- storytelling
- reposts from other users
- asking opinions from the followers
- behind the scenes of events and the office
- get to know the staff
- feedbacks from customers
- educating the followers ("Did you know this about...")

As social media is literally SOCIAL media, Instagram Stories is a powerful tool to create interaction and to really be social with the followers. Even though there are new features on Instagram and Facebook published on a regular basis, Stories is here to stay (Boogaard 12 February 2019). Its popularity has grown rapidly having now over 500 million daily users, when in 2017 the number was "only" 300 million (Facebook 2019). Over 200 million users visit at least one business profile and over 60 % of the users say that they find new products from Instagram. (Instagram 2019.)

Instagram Live is a live-stream tool, and it can be seen first before the Stories. Live is a good tool to get free visibility, as users will see the live streams that are on as they open Instagram. Users can comment and react to the live stream, but the comment option can also be turned off. Live tool is good to use for example from a special event, making an announcement or a Q&A session. (Coles 2018, 125.)

## **2.5 LinkedIn for businesses**

In 2003 LinkedIn was launched and now it is the world's biggest professional network. In 2016 acquisition by Microsoft was completed, so the world's leading professional cloud and professional network combined their power. LinkedIn has over 645 million users worldwide and its mission is to connect professionals to create more productivity and success for the members. (LinkedIn 2019.)

Companies' can create a business LinkedIn page, so that potential customers and future employees on LinkedIn can find information, career opportunities and relevant news of the company. Business pages should have an introduction text on the top of the page, that includes basic information of the company's history, mission, products and services.

LinkedIn is a powerful recruitment platform, as companies can share their story and values on the career page, and this way find the best employees as possible. With the new feature New Recruiter and Jobs, launched in the end of summer 2019, recruiting has become even more effective. The two core talent products – Jobs and Recruitment – are now on the same platform. The new interface and tools allow jobseekers to find the right jobs easily and recruiters to find new employees more efficiently than before. (Jersin 15 January 2019.)

To get followers to the LinkedIn page, companies should encourage their employees to add their position at the company on their LinkedIn profiles and to follow the company page. Already this expands the organization's reach widely. Relevant content (articles, news, new services) should be published on the feed regularly, at least one every week. Posts with an image get 98 percent more comments compared to text-only. The LinkedIn page can be linked on the company's website and on other social media accounts to gain more followers. Also paid advertising can be done in LinkedIn, which works similarly as in Facebook. It is cost-effective, as the ads can be targeted for the right audience. (Newberry 13 August 2018.)

## 2.6 Paid advertising and algorithms

There are two different kind of posts on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn: organic and paid. Organic posts are the ones that the company has shared on their Facebook wall. These reach the fan base (people who have liked the page), but after the big algorithm change in 2014, less than 10 % of the “fans” will see the post. Facebook reduced the reach of business pages’ posts in news feed dramatically, as too promotional posts were filling up the feeds. Before this a 25 000 follower’s page’s post would have been seen by at least 15 000 of the fans, and now it would be less than 250 fans. (Hanlon 2019, 91.) After this change paid advertising has got much more popular amongst companies. Organic posts don’t get much visibility on Facebook at all, unless it is liked, commented and shared a lot. This is one of the reasons why paid advertising in social media has exploded. Paid advertising can be recognized from the small text “Sponsored” within the post. When companies do paid advertising for example on Facebook, the target group, budget and length can be adjusted according to the company. This means a lot of new traffic and potential new fans for the company’s page, if the ad is well made. (Hanlon 2019, 88.) One of the main reasons is that you can target your ad to just the right people as the platforms have lots of personal data of the users. (Hanlon 2019, 91.)

Facebook algorithms want their users to see the most relevant posts first on their feed, and not in a chronological order. Last year the algorithm changed so that the private users could see the most valuable content, their friends’ and family’s content, first. Timing is more important than before, so the posts could get the most organic reach as possible. Depending on the country, industry and other factors, there is not one best time to post. By trying different post times and checking the activity of the followers for example from Facebook Analytics, the best times can be found. Algorithms prefer also video content and frequent posting. Stories and Live features don’t have straight connection to the algorithm, but making consistent Stories and using Live stream, keeps the organization visible on the top of user’s feed. (Barnhart 31 May 2019.) Instagram’s algorithm favours high-quality, humane, interacting and frequent posting (Barnhart 21 June 2019).

LinkedIn’s algorithm (a bot) categorises business pages’ content as spam, low-quality or clear. To get the clear ranking, content must be high-quality, and preferably with text and image or video. All social media algorithms love engaging content, as does LinkedIn’s. So, if the post is getting a lot of likes, comments and shares, it will be showed to even more people. If the posts are struggling to get interaction from the followers, the content might not be relevant enough to the audience. (Newberry 2018.)

Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn are changing continuously, so it is crucial for the staff to follow the latest social media news and trends. Many blogs and websites gather these trends, for example [blog.facebook.com](http://blog.facebook.com), [socialmediatoday.com](http://socialmediatoday.com) and [likeable.com/blog](http://likeable.com/blog). Keeping up with the trends and algorithms takes time, but this is very important for the businesses' social media presence to stay updated and fresh. (Kerpen 2019, 260.)

## **2.7 Knowing the audience**

Companies can not please everyone in all social media channels. Customers' needs, wants, behaviours and lifestyles differ, so it is important to know who you are speaking to and which channels they are using. According to Kotler & Armstrong (2016, 222) mass marketing era is over, as target marketing has taken over with the help of social media channels and their possibilities in marketing.

Market segmentation is about dividing the company's market to smaller groups with specific behaviours, needs and characteristics. Companies choose the most attractive segments and target their marketing to these groups, to achieve best results of marketing. Then they think how they differentiate from their competitors, what is their value proposition. This way they aim to create extra customer value. (Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 223.)

The four most important segmentation variables for consumer markets according to Kotler & Armstrong (2016, 223) are:

- geographic
- demographic
- psychographic
- behavioural

Geographical segmentation includes customers' home country, city, climate and world region. Companies can choose to operate in all areas as well, but then it is crucial to remember the differences in needs and wants. Especially for local companies targeting their marketing to specific geographical areas, they can most likely reach just the right people and save money from unnecessary marketing. (Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 223-224.)

Demographic segmenting is the most popular way to divide company's customers. Variables include for example age, gender, religion, family, education, race, generation and nationality. This segmentation style is so popular because the variables are easily measured and divided, and the consumer's wants and needs often vary with demographic variables. Psychographic segmentation is a bit more complicated, as it divides customers into groups based on their characteristics, lifestyle and social class. Behavioural factors divide customers considering their buying behaviours, knowledge and attitudes. This is often the

best starting point to start the segmentation of company's customers. (Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 224-226.)

Analysing competitors' actions, processes and strategies is crucial to companies. Competitor's existence is not just a bad thing, as companies truly benefit from them. Competitors might even help increase total demand and without competitor's product development and new technologies of the industry would be developing slower. (Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 574.)

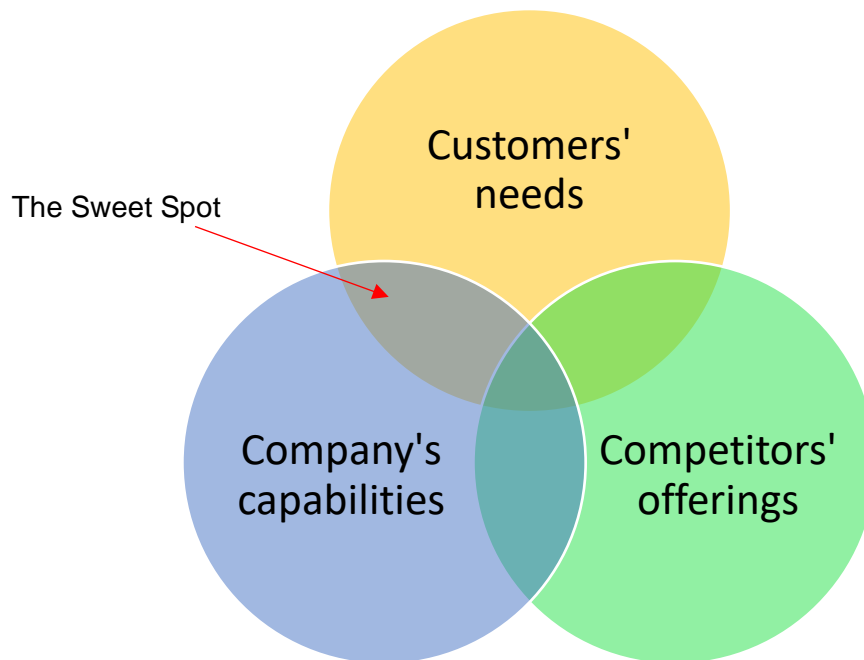


Figure 2. The Sweet Spot (adapted from Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 556)

Companies aim to find the “sweet spot” when differentiating from competitors. In the figure 2 on the top there are the customers' needs and wants. Below on the right is the company's capabilities, what can the company offer. On the left side there are the competitors' offerings. Companies want to find the sweet spot, that is between the customers' needs and company's capabilities. This is the admirable spot, as the competitors can not offer this and here the company can really differentiate. (Kotler & Armstrong 2011, 555.)

## 2.8 Buyer persona

According to Heinze & Co., to understand digital and social media marketing, companies should start with the question “What is buyer persona?”.

“Buyer persona is a fictitious representation of your customer which is based on your market research data and usually includes demographics, locations, national and regional culture, socio-economic background, decision-making patterns, their “pain points” and “hot points”, the keywords they might use on search engines and social networks that they might engage with, and other information that helps marketers to focus content towards buyers’ needs” (Heinze & Co. 2017, xxii).

Buyer persona is a part of company’s strategic planning. Creating buyer personas makes speaking towards customers easier, as we have made it more concrete who we are speaking to. Even though buyer persona is not a real person, it has the correct wants, needs, likes and dislikes, as company’s real customers. People appreciate being spoken to as individuals, not as a mass without a personal voice. (Heinze & al. 2017, 5.)

Heinze & al. (2017, 5) argue, that the core in creating buyer personas lies in building strong customer relationships. Companies can make more than one buyer persona and direct specific messages to the right audience. Heinze & al. (2017, 31) have created five rules of successful social media considering buyer personas. According to Heinze & al. the buyer persona:

- can be accurately targeted using social media channels
- expects sincere two-way communication with “their” brands
- will immediately react to poor messages that denigrate “their” brand
- will quickly spread negative word of mouth about “their” brand if they are mistreated
- will resist the most blatant advertising messages on social media



## 2.9 Social media costs

Even though opening up a Facebook or Instagram account is free, planning, implementing and evaluating the social media takes a lot of time and work. Gladly social media marketing is still cheaper than many traditional marketing tactics. Ads on social media channels do cost, but it is relatively cheap when companies know their target audience. (Kerpen 2019, 10.)

Counting social media marketing ROI (return-on-investment) can be challenging, as likes, comments and shares are not directly counted in euros. To count the ROMI (return-on-marketing-investment) of social media, two key elements should be set: monetary investment in social media and attaching a €-sign to the social media goals. The simple formula to count ROI is:

$$ROI (\%): (return - investment) / investment * 100$$

To calculate the return, goals should be chosen and then tracked. A goal in social media can be i.e. new followers, sign ups for newsletters or online purchases. After this the monetary value should be assigned, i.e. what is the average purchase through the website or PPC (pay-per-click) costs in paid advertising. The time invested in the process, money spent in paid advertising and possible social media tool costs should be summed and this way the total investment is calculated. (Lee 2016.)

There are different methods of how much advertising on social media platforms cost. Cost per click (CPC), also known as pay per click (PPC), is one of the most used methods; the company is charged when a person clicks the ad. This is cost-effective, as you are not paying for anything unnecessary, just for the clicks that you get. (Hanlon, 75). The price of a click varies from ca. 50 cents to 2,50 euros, depending on the time of the year, industry and several other factors. The budget is created before the advertising timeline, so there will be no surprise bills (for example 100 euros for a week for one paid ad). Other methods include CPL (cost per like), CPA (cost per action) and CPV (cost per view). (Main 2019.)

### 3 Customer engagement in social media

Some specific factors and elements in companies' social media strengthen the customer engagement. In this chapter the main factors that build stronger customer relationships are presented. In the end the author explains the meaning of user generated content and what kind of different elements brands hold inside.

#### 3.1 Factors

In today's marketing customers appreciate a personal attitude and are more likely to interact with the company, if the company's voice is human and not robot-like. This can be challenging especially for big and "serious" companies, but the fact must be remembered, that we are talking about *social* media. Customers want to be heard and spoken to as human beings. Companies should connect with their customers and be also flexible to response customers' changing needs and wants. (Kerpen 2019, 120-121.)

Marketing has been for years just talking and even yelling the message. Social media has enabled companies to listen to their customers online every day and minute a year. To be social in social media organizations should answer customer's comments, wonders and questions on social media. This creates important conversations and relationships with the customers. By listening and talking with them (not just to them) issues, ideas and other important aspects can be found that the company can use to improve. This way important data can be gathered as well. (Kerpen 2019, 14.) The interaction should be an ongoing discussion rather than random and irregular comments (Kerpen 2019, 113).

Transparency is another key word in social media. Honesty and transparency are important factors, because this builds a direct relationship between the customer and the company. Lying or pretending can lead to massive social media crisis, that is not easy to fix. Losing trust in the world of social media can happen over one night. (Kerpen 2019, 137.)

### 3.2 Brand elements

Consumers trust in strong brands, as they have a specific promise, message and style. Having a strong brand identity helps companies to clarify the main message and attracts the right buyer personas. The brand identity should be seen all over your marketing mix, from website to social media channels and events. Building a brand requires careful understanding what the company stands for, what are the values and what is your brand's essence. The company must deliver the trustworthy promise in every touchpoint between you and the customer. (Heinze & al. 2017, 139.)

Table 1. esSense Framework (adapted from Gains 2014, 172)




SENSE 	SYMBOL 	STORY 
Color	Name	Archetype
Flavor	Shape	Emotion
Touch	Graphic devices	Ritual
Sound	Sonic icons	Song
Texture	Font	Metaphor
Orientation	Size	Ambience
Movement	Format	Navigation
Temperature	Visual icon	Tradition
Light	Pictures	Behavior
Intensity	Language	Talent

Table 1 (Gains 2014, 172) shows the three factors strongly linked to brand engagement: sense, symbol and story. Each of them has 10 touchpoints that complete the whole brand engagement system. Senses include different ways to engage to the brand for example by seeing, tasting or hearing. Consistent graphical factors from shapes to sonic iconography strengthen the brand identity and develop the symbolic value of the brand. Through stories brands can open their vision, values and history in an emotion-triggering way and build an emotional connection between the brand and the customers.

A good example of a successful brand identity is LEGO. LEGO's advertising asks customers to use their imagination to create something from a few bricks. Their products and stores are fun and colourful, and encourage children to be creative, have fun and learn. LEGO's play parks are full of surprises and fun activities, creating a true brand experience. These all touchpoints are aligned and consistent, which creates a strong brand identity. (Gains 2014, 171-202.)

According to Heinze & al. (2017, 140-141) there are specific questions to be answered when building a brand:

- How do we behave? What is your company's culture?
- What do we do? What are your products and services?
- What do we know?
- What do we say? How do we communicate with customers?

The brand should be seen in all the social media channels and other digital touchpoints. Profile and background photos should be similar and have the same style in each platform. The style and the feeling of company's social media presence should be consistent and have the same brand personality and consistent message. All of company's social media profiles should be interlinked, as this gives a message to the buyer that the brand wants to engage. (Heinze & al. 2017, 147.) To measure company's online brand awareness success Google Analytics is an efficient tool to use. It evaluates website traffic, paid and organic channels, time spent on website / on specific content. To analyse company's social media engagement, Facebook and Instagram analytics are simple yet useful tools to get data of all the interactions, comments, views and shares of the social media posts. (Heinze & al. 2017, 232.)

The content of your brand shared in your social media pages should have specific guidelines. For example, brand voice, language and editorial style should be determined. All the employees that have any part in the company's marketing must follow the guidelines, so that the content is always the same style and on-brand. (Hanlon & al. 2019, 111.)

### 3.3 Measuring engagement

According to Sehl (10 April 2019) engagement rate is the KPI of social media in 2019. There are various ways to calculate engagement, one being engagement rate by posts:

$$\text{Engagement rate by posts} = \text{Total engagements per post} / \text{Total followers} * 100$$

This calculation will give the engagement rate on a specific post. Total engagements mean likes, comments and shares of the post combined. To get the average rate, add up all posts's engagement rates and divide by total number of posts. Another popular way to measure social media engagement is engagement rate by reach:

$$\text{Engagement rate by reach} = \text{Total engagements per post} / \text{reach per post} * 100$$

This shows how big percent of the people that have seen the post, have reacted to it. Calculating the engagement by reach can be more accurate than calculating it by number of followers, because all the page's followers don't see every post. Though, also the size of the reach can vary a lot for many different reasons, such as timing of the post. (Sehl 10 April 2019.)

The question is, what is a good engagement rate for businesses on social media? A good engagement rate on Facebook for businesses is 3,6 % (Newberry 4 November 2019). According to Rabo (12 April 2019) an average engagement rate on Instagram for businesses is 4,7 %, but it varies a lot depending on the industry, country and other factors. For Instagram to get better engagement rates Rabo advices:

- engagement feeds engagement – like and comment other's posts
- engage with other's posts just before and after posting content – this increases the chance that people will visit the account
- use hashtags
- write more engaging captions – a good caption expresses personality, has a call-to-action and gives the picture more context
- find the best time to post – try out different posting times and go through the data

Raising the engagement rate can be simple and easy. By trying different posting times, hashtags, captions and photos, and remembering to monitor the data, the engagement rates can get higher. (Rabo 12 April 2019.)

## **4 Building a social media marketing plan**

Successful social media does not happen without a plan. It requires good project management, resources and a strategy. In this chapter the process of making an effective social media marketing plan is described. Many of the digital marketing books of today recommend quite similar strategies as SOSTAC®, starting from setting goals and finishing with measuring and results. SOSTAC® model by P. R. Smith is one of the best-known marketing models. In this chapter the author will describe the different parts of creating an efficient social media marketing plan.

### **4.1 Strategy**

As consistency is one of the key words of successful social media presence. Companies must have a social media strategy to be able execute consistent quality content. A good marketing strategy is well planned and includes different kind of, specifically informed tactics for example Facebook advertising and Instagram Stories (Hanlon, 226). According to the Content Marketing Institute (2017) there are five steps to follow to create profitable and successful marketing:

1. Purpose and goals
2. Audience
3. Story
4. Process
5. Measurement

Hanlon (2019, 226) argues that it is crucial to have clear objectives and purpose for the content that companies are sharing. SMART objectives give a clear guideline about what a good goal means: S specific, M measurable, A achievable, R realistic and T timed. Goals of a social media marketing strategy can be for example to explain the company values to the social media audience or to raise the average number of posts' likes for 20 %.

As discussed earlier in this thesis, businesses must know their audience well. Otherwise any presence in social media can be waste of time. First gathering the user data is done, and then different kind of user personas can be categorised. For example, one persona could be divorced women aged 40-50 years old, living in Helsinki. The more you know about your customers, the better you can target your message to the right people. (Hanlon 2019, 103.)

Story in this context does not necessarily mean a traditional story with a beginning and ending. It means more what values does your company have, how do you differ from the competitors, what unique do you offer and what value will you give to your followers in exchange for their time. You must have a clear direction and message to the followers, so they will know what to expect. Having a clear story also builds trust and loyalty between you and your followers. When getting off the road, getting back to remind yourself with your company's story helps you to stay on the right direction. (Content Marketing Institute 2017, 12-13.)

Digital marketing should not be seen as a project or a campaign, but more as an ongoing process. The process in social media marketing strategy includes different tactics, how will story and company message be delivered to the audience. To successfully execute the process, a guideline of the basic factors of the social media marketing should be listed. The guideline (Content Marketing Institute 2017) includes different aspects:

- steps of the marketing process, and the order of them
- who is posting what, which responsibilities belong to which employee?
- brand and quality standards
- social media channels and content format
- other resources

There are many different things to consider in the processes, so it is wise to divide the plan to different categories. These categories can be for example: a content taxonomy, standard workflow, required skills, contributor guidelines and required tools. (Content Marketing Institute 2017, 14-15.)

To be able to measure success in social media, there must be something concrete to measure. KPIs (key performance indicators) are the most important indicators, that you choose what to measure. KPI's go hand in hand with your SMART objectives. (Heinze & al. 2017, 117.) For example, if one of company's goals has been to raise the average number of likes in Instagram by 20 %, this can be easily measured with the help of the data from Instagram Analytics. The goals of a marketing strategy can be named in the plan and then marked if the goal was achieved or not (Content Marketing Institute 2017, 17).

## 4.2 Other strategy models

SOSTAC® by P. R. Smith is a marketing communications plan, that provides the most important parts of a comprehensive marketing plan: S – Situation analysis, O – Objectives, S – Strategy, T – Tactics, A – Action and C – control. SOSTAC® can be used to plan anything, for example a corporate plan or even just a personal. By following the six steps creating a plan has been made simple and easy to remember. Previously presented Content Marketing Institute's five steps is like SOSTAC®, both ending with measurement and control. (Smith & Zook 2016, 268.)

Heinze & al. (2017, 32) present an example of a kid's clothing brand Happeak's digital engagement's strategy. The list has seven steps and is similar to the strategy presented by Content Marketing Institute but has slightly different steps. The seven steps are:

- Plan – plan, implement and evaluate. This way improvement is possible.
- Budget – budget to support the operation of the company's digital environments.
- Manage – social media content should be managed daily to ensure quality and consistency.
- Buyer persona – buyer persona should always be remembered, and that it's expectations are increasing constantly.
- Share – content whether in the website or social media, should share information of the company.
- Engage – a mix of content and engagement, create a community for the buyer persona.
- Align – all marketing actions should be aligned.

This strategy as well shows the importance of strategy. Holistic viewing and seeing the marketing as an entity is crucial. (Heinze & al. 2017, 32.)

## 4.3 Content creation

Content is king in all social media platforms. Good content in social media, from photos and videos to quizzes and contests, can strengthen brand image, brings new customers, get more traffic to websites and other social media accounts. (Hanlon 2019, 96.) Once the strategy has been created, the next step is to start planning different ways of telling the company's story to the crowd. Content marketing is not push messages and sales ads, that yell "buy, buy, buy" (Coles 2018, 21). Good content is something that brings extra value to the reader and what she/he wants to see more. The Storybox Selection™ on the following page shows different ideas for creating interesting content to social media channels. (Hanlon 2019, 104.)



Table 2. Storybox Selection™ (adapted from Hanlon 104 table 4.4)

The organisation	Products and services	Knowledge and expertise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Values</li> <li>•Heritage</li> <li>•Responsibility</li> <li>•Achievements</li> <li>•Milestones and highlights</li> <li>•Team</li> <li>•Team and employee achievements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Products, services</li> <li>•Original ideas</li> <li>•How has the product evolved</li> <li>•Behind the scenes</li> <li>•The market covered</li> <li>•Customer stories</li> <li>•Customer success</li> <li>•Educational stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Research</li> <li>•Surveys</li> <li>•Feedback</li> <li>•Forecasting the future</li> <li>•Resources</li> <li>•Reading list</li> <li>•Templates</li> <li>•FAQ</li> </ul>

Every content should have a purpose, whether it is a call-to-action, sharing the company values or to launch a new product. As seen in the figure 3 on the next page, first the content should get the person's attention and make the person aware for example of the new product or service. After awareness the next stage is conversion. This means for example sales or to get a new lead. From this the organization has gathered data, that it can use for a direct conversation with the customer. The next step is to keep the customer and keep on delighting him/her with interesting content. For retention companies can use interactive ways such as apps and games, or just images, words, audio- and video-content to bring some extra value. (Hanlon 2019, 106-109.) A further step after retention is evangelism. This can be achieved if the customer is so satisfied with the company, that the customers themselves start to promote the product or the company on their own channels. Good online reviews are considered evangelism as well. Content done by customers (for example telling about the product on social media or unboxing the product) is called user-generated content. (Hanlon 2019, 235.)

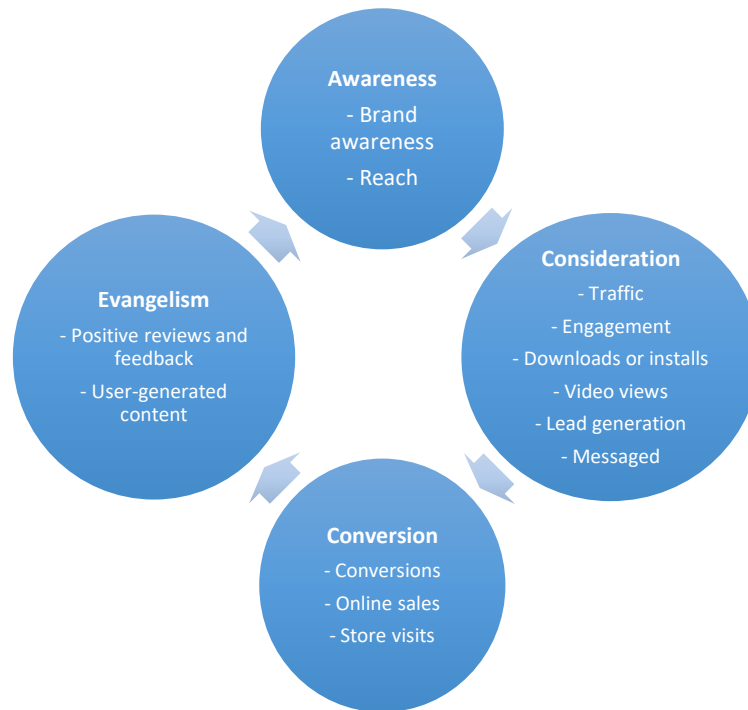


Figure 3. The social media strategy framework (adapted from Hanlon 2019, 234)

The marketing plan should also include themed contents, such as Valentine's day and Father's Day. These can be planned even just once a year, checking most relevant events and holidays from the calendar, and scheduling themed posts for the right dates. (Coles 2018, 21.) Scheduling social media posts is efficient and saves time. Scheduling tools provide also analytics and other powerful social media management tools. (Barnhart 12 June 2019.)

## **5 Creating a social media marketing plan for Evento**

As mentioned before, the author has been doing social media marketing for Evento. She has been involved with developing the social media presence and making the marketing more consistent. In this part the author goes through the processes of creating the final product. During the years the author has done marketing for Evento, she has gained a lot of knowledge and insight of the commissioning party's social media. Therefore part of the sources of the following parts' are from the insights of the author. The author has interviewed the commissioning party to get more knowledge of the company's social media marketing situation. The interview will be analysed in this part as well.

Evento already has active Facebook and Instagram accounts with a lot of followers. The target is to raise the customer engagement and loyalty, which in social media means mainly raising the number of posts' likes, shares and comments, as well as the interactivity between the company and the followers. The concepts discussed in the theoretical part will be applied in this empirical part.

### **5.1 Social media situation**

Evento has active Facebook and Instagram pages. The Facebook page has an active posting rhythm with more than five posts every week. The Facebook page has 3777 followers (Evento's Facebook page 11 November 2019). Articles from Evento's website, competitions, news and events are being posted on a regular basis on the news feed. On most of their Facebook posts there are a few (2-5) likes per post. This means the engagement rate is quite low. Still some more popular posts get tens of likes and a few comments. For example, on the week from 4<sup>th</sup> of November until 10<sup>th</sup> of November Evento had 9 posts and the average amount of interactions was 33. Most of the posts had 2-4 likes, but on that week, there was a book raffle -post, that received 212 interactions. Facebook Stories is used from time to time promoting mostly Evento's own events (workshops, Evento Awards etc.). Facebook live is being used for example at Evento Awards, where awards are given to the event industry professionals.

Evento's Instagram page has 1112 followers, and the number has started to raise faster after the company has started posting more regularly from the beginning of 2019. There are approx. 5-10 Instagram posts per week (Evento's Instagram page 11 November 2019). The posting activity is relatively good, but the content needs more consistency, quality and a plan. The engagement rate is relatively low with an average of 15 likes per post. For example, on the week from 28<sup>th</sup> of October until 3<sup>rd</sup> of November Evento's Instagram page had 6 posts with an average of 14,6 likes per post.

To get more engagement and interaction from the followers the commissioning party has started to do more paid advertising on Facebook and Instagram. Paid advertising has been done for example of their social media competitions and print magazine -cover posts. Because of the huge Facebook algorithm change in 2014 (Hanlon 2019, 91), paid advertising in social media is cost-effective and almost mandatory today to get the posts seen by a good number of people. The LinkedIn page of Evento is not active and it is not seen as an important marketing channel for the commissioning company at the moment (Harlin 5 November 2019).

## 5.2 Risk analysis

In the SWOT analysis there are Evento's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats listed. This figure helps to understand the situation of the company, and what issues should be taken more into consideration.

Table 3. SWOT -analysis of Evento's social media

<b>Strengths:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Specific audience</li> <li>– Growing industry</li> <li>– Specific topic (events)</li> <li>– Quality</li> <li>– Materials from the print magazine and websites</li> <li>– Not much competitors</li> <li>– Accuracy</li> </ul>	<b>Weaknesses:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Resources</li> <li>– No personal touch</li> <li>– Very professional topic</li> <li>– Unclear responsibilities within the team</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Growing industry</li> <li>– Skills within the company</li> <li>– Doing something completely new</li> <li>– Show the way of effective social media marketing as a magazine</li> <li>– Promote the existing content (from print and online)</li> </ul>	<b>Threats:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Have to be unbiased</li> <li>– Professionality</li> <li>– Cold</li> <li>– Lacking uniqueness</li> </ul>

Evento has an efficient position in the market, as the magazine does not have many competitors. There are a few Finnish magazines that have slightly similar topics but are not concentrated mainly on events. Evento is targeted for employees planning and producing small and large events. Readers might organize smaller conferences and meetings within the company, or work for big event production companies as producers. This gives a clear

picture of it's target audience and helps when creating the social media content. Event industry is growing, and for younger generations interested in the industry, social media is the right place to be present to get their attention.

Because the commissioning party is a multi-channel media, it has a lot of material from the print magazine and other medias. These can be easily modified to fit to their social media channels, and this way save costs for example from photoshoots, journalists etc. Still the social media channels should also contain material that is meant only for social media.

Evento's message in all medias must be unbiased. This shuts down a variety of efficient social media marketing ways but can also be a strength. Emotion-triggering, photos of people and human-like marketing gets often the most interaction in social media. The commissioning party's services are mainly targeted for businesses and professionals, so the language and style should be appropriate, unbiased and professional. Interesting facts of the industry, promoting articles of business professionals, telling stories of successful companies or showing behind the scenes of the office and events are just a few ideas that could be interestingly executed in social media. This kind of content brings more customer value, especially when targeted to the right audience. The style, language, format, emojis etc. must be listed down and shared with the social media team, so that the social media posts are consistent and on-brand. If the guidelines and responsibilities are clear to everybody involved with Evento's marketing, interesting content can be done even with these limitations.

### **5.3 Interview**

The author interviewed the business director of Evento on 5 November 2019. The interview was done face-to-face at the commissioning company's office in Helsinki. The author wanted to find out more of the situation of Evento's social media now and how it should be developed.

As Evento is a multi-channel media (digital, print, events and social media), social media should support the other medias and be aligned with them. The interviewee agreed that social media, especially Instagram, is a great way to reach a younger customer segment. The main goals of developing their social media are to make it more consistent and active, and with the help of that to gain more followers and more interaction to their Facebook and Instagram pages. The most important social media channels for the company are Instagram and Facebook. According to the interviewee, especially attention to Instagram should be directed. Their Facebook account has got an active rhythm, but Instagram is

not as strong yet. On LinkedIn the staff of Evento are the company's ambassadors. Evento has a LinkedIn business page, but it is not active. The interviewee does not consider activity there necessary at the moment. In the future, when more resources are put into social media marketing, LinkedIn could become a valuable channel for the commissioning party, especially for recruiting. (Harlin 5 November 2019.)

According to the interviewee, Evento should be seen as a superior and overpowering source of information when it comes to organizing events. All the different medias from print to social media should be aligned with the same message, style and brand essence. With more consistency, interaction and interesting content Evento's social media presence can reach a very dominant position in the events industry.

#### **5.4 Competitors**

According to the results of a research done in May 2018 for Evento by Tietoykkönen, the biggest competitors of the commissioning company are Kauppalehti -magazine, Talouselämä -magazine and Google. Kauppalehti and Talouselämä are magazines that concentrate on businesses, entrepreneurs, investing and finance (Talouselämä 2020). They have some similar contents and topics as Evento, but Evento is the only one concentrating on event industry. Evento also fights for people's time, whether it is time spent on smart phones, time with family or time with hobbies. According to the interview with the business director of Evento, these everyday time consumers are the biggest competitors of Evento.

Kauppalehti has over 51 000 followers on Facebook and over 3400 on Instagram. The company mainly promotes their own internet articles on Facebook. Recently they have been posting even over 15 posts per day. On the week from 4<sup>th</sup> of November until 10<sup>th</sup> of November Kauppalehti posted 82 times on Facebook, with an average reaction/like number of 30. Many of the posts had also comments and even conversations. Almost every post included a link from their internet article. (Kauppalehti's Facebook page 11 November 2019.)

Talouselämä has as well multiple posts per day on Facebook with over 38 000 followers. On Instagram they have 4240 followers and a semi-active feed. On the week from 28<sup>th</sup> of October until 3<sup>rd</sup> of November Talouselämä's Instagram page has had only two posts with an average of 48 likes. Some weeks the page has had more posts, and some weeks there has been any posts. Most of the posts are teasers from an internet article from their website. Content with photos of people and quotations work well on Instagram and get a lot of likes. The Instagram feed looks consistent and on-brand with Talouselämä. (Talouselämä's Instagram page 11 November 2019.)

## **5.5 Purpose and story**

Evento aims to be a superior source of event and industry news for event professionals and future experience creators in Finland. As Evento is a multimedia channel for event professionals, the social media should be as good quality and inspiring as their other medias. To have a straight direction in social media, purpose of being there should be determined. The purpose of Evento's social media presence is to offer event industry news and ideas to event professionals and future event creators. In social media Evento can attract new and younger audience, so the language, photos and other key elements should be aligned with the new potential audience.

Because Evento's Facebook and Instagram accounts have followers who don't read the print magazine, too much content from the magazine should not be shared for free. Still teasers, sneak peeks and quotations from the print magazine can be shared in social media to awake interest. For the print magazine readers, it is important to give some extra value by sharing content that can not be found from the magazine. For example, competitions and livestream or Stories from events creates customer value, that the print magazine or website does not offer.

## **5.6 Target audience**

According to Evento's Facebook statistics, on Facebook most (62 %) of Evento's followers are women. The biggest follower group of all is 45-54-year-old women. These facts should be used especially when creating paid ads to Facebook. When targeting ads to the right audience, better results occur, and the money used to advertising will be spent wisely. Interests, hobbies, job titles and other very specific features can be determined in paid social media advertising. Therefore, it is crucial to know the audience, so companies can market just to the right people.

The figure 4 on the following page shows the age distribution of all Evento's Facebook 3788 followers. The biggest age group is 45-54 years old (30 %). Almost as big with 28 % of all followers are 35-44-year olds, and there are only half as much 25-34-year old followers with 16 %. 55-65-year olds group is 15 % of all, and 18-24-year olds just over 1 %. Most likely the group of 55-64-year olds will grow soon, because of the population aging and digitalisation.

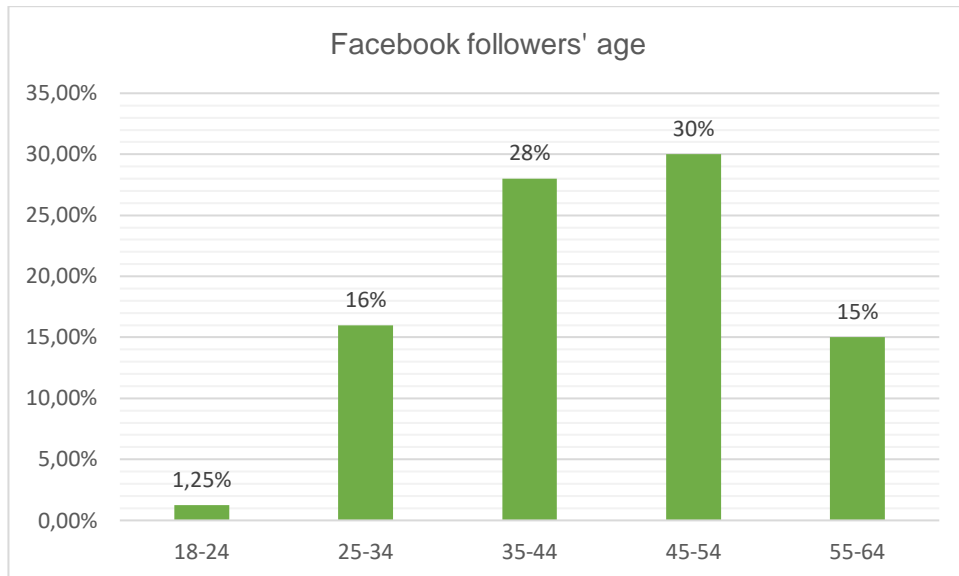


Figure 4. Facebook followers' age distribution (from Evento's Facebook statistics)

According to Evento's Instagram page's statistics 72 % of Evento's Instagram followers are women. The figure 5 on the following page shows that the biggest follower group with 37 % of all 1130 followers on Instagram is 35-44-year olds. The second biggest age group is 25-34-year olds with 28 % and then 45-54 olds with 23 %. The figures show that Facebook customer base of Evento is older of Facebook that on Instagram. According to the Instagram statistics Evento's Instagram followers are online the most in the evening. Instagram and Facebook Analytics give a lot of good data to analyse, but they have bugs and errors sometimes as well. Therefore, manual measurement should be always done as well, and never trust only these ready-made statistics. For example, because Evento's marketing content is mainly for professionals and companies, working hours and especially popular break times are good times to post. These statistics must be always critically thought, as they might not be aligned with the real results of the posts. Best times for each channel can be found by trying out different times and then measuring the number of interactions of each post.



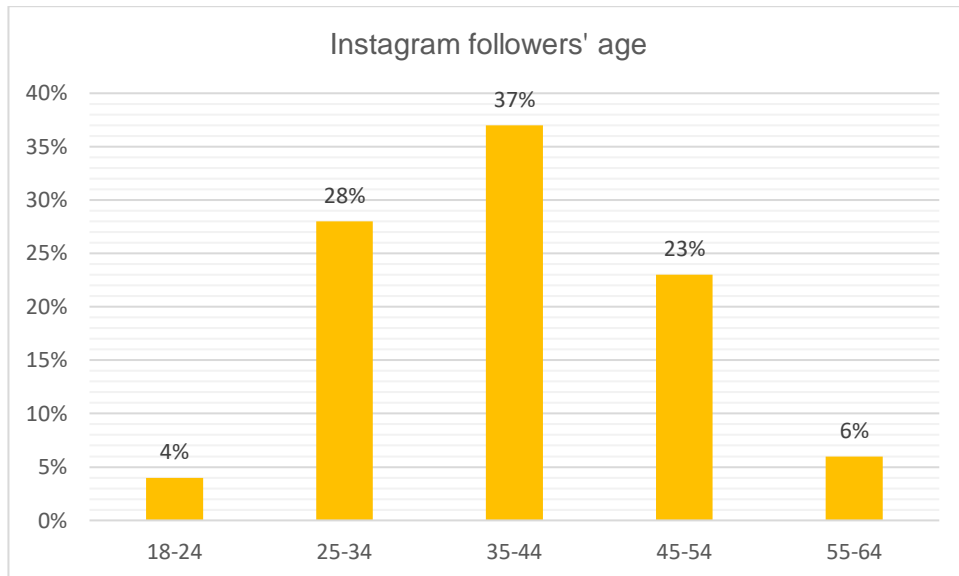


Figure 5. Instagram Followers age distribution (from Evento's Instagram statistics)

With the information the author already has and the data from social media channels of the commissioning party, some user personas can be created. One of Evento's user profiles could be for example a 49-year-old woman (Karen), who is working as an office manager for a big finance company. She organizes annual corporate parties, recreation days and workshops for the employees of the company. Karen believes in lifelong learning and enjoys reading top-seller books. She is married and has two boys. On her free time Karen likes to run, read and spend time with the family. To make more relevant and specific user personas like Karen, more information and data would be needed of Evento's social media followers. Still even with half imaginative profiles like Karen, user personas and the creation of them helps marketing to have the right direction and a personal feeling. As mentioned earlier in the theory part, marketing is communicating with people.

Knowing interests, hobbies, demographics and jobs of the followers is important information especially for paid advertising. These all factors can be chosen and narrowed down to target the ads to the right people. The figure 6 on the next page is an example of Evento's Facebook target audience. The audience has been narrowed down aligned with Evento's Facebook Insights.

## Boost Post

Location - Living In Finland: Turku Southwest Finland; Espoo, Helsinki, Vantaa (+25 mi) Uusimaa

Age 27 - 47

Gender Female

People Who Match Interests: Office, Music festivals, Fair, Festival, Catering, Creativity, Burnout (psychology), Business or Entrepreneurship, Job title: Owner and CEO

[Less](#) ▲

Figure 6. Example of Facebook ad's target audience (Evento's Facebook Insights)

### 5.7 Process

After each magazine publication, article sneak peaks and quotation posts should be scheduled for the future to Facebook and Instagram. Specific magazine issue related posts would be best to post before the next magazine, but can be also posted after, as long as the number of the issue is mentioned in the post's text. Scheduling saves time and other resources and helps to keep the feed looking consistent. All employees from the marketing team must use the same scheduling tool to avoid unsteady social media feeds. If another person schedules from another tool, some days might have tens of posts and another day has none. Also, if busier times or employee changes are ahead, the company can react to this early and avoid a "dry season" on social media.

Livestream video or Facebook/Instagram Stories should be used in every event that Evento organizes. This requires one employee (with a good understanding of social media) to be responsible for this in each event, preferably always the same person. The person posting at the event should only have this task, as creating social media content, writing texts and livestreaming at an event takes time and work. If no one could do the job for an event, another employee working at the event should take a few photos and videos, share them to the marketing person, so some content could be shared from the event at least afterwards.

## 5.8 Measurement

To be able to develop social media marketing, measuring results should be done regularly. Instagram and Facebook offer their own analytics services for business accounts but measuring the most important KPI's can be done manually by analysing the results.

A suggestion for Evento's social media measurement plan is:

1. Facebook and Instagram: check Facebook and Instagram analytics once a month.
2. Write down every month to an excel sheet the number of followers and posts of that month.
3. Write down the best and worst succeeded posts, how many likes, shares and comments they had, was the post a link, video or photo.
4. Write down development actions.

This kind of measurement actions should be executed each month (for example the first Monday of each month) to be able to grow and develop the social media presence. Other tactics and metrics, for example engagement rate, paid advertisement, time of posting or link clicks, can be added to the measurement plan as well.

Table 4. Social media measurement plan example.

Oct-19	Followers	Best post	Specs	Worst post	Specs	Development tactics
Facebook	3700	Quotation photo, Event students (22 likes, 3 shares)	Happy people on the photo, quotation, interesting text, other pages tagged on the post, posted	Evento Awards -rules	No photo, no emojis, posted in the evening, no emotion	Prefer posting in the weekday mornings, use some emojis, use photos, tag another page if possible
Instagram	1100	Evento Awards - Speakers (23 likes, 2 comments)	Speakers tagged, celebrities, happy faces, informative text, emojis used, 7 hashtags	Commercial co-operation -post (3 likes)	Graphical photo, no people, commercial looking, no emojis, no hashtags	Prefer real photos, tag other pages, avoid commercial texts and photos

From the above table 4 the best and worst posts of Evento's Facebook and Instagram pages are analysed. The development tactics tell what to do more in the future to avoid unsuccessful posts and how to aim to effective posts. When the social media presence and rhythm develop more, many more metrics can be added to the plan.

## 5.9 Schedule

With multiple people posting different and even same topics, social media marketing can easily be very confusing. To avoid this, a specific and clear plan should be created. To keep the social media rhythm consistent, posting should be based on a social media marketing plan. In the table 7 a basic social media marketing schedule for Facebook and Instagram is presented. The base can be even the same for each month. For scheduling and executing the plan scheduling tools like hootsuite.com are efficient to use. Facebook and even Instagram posts can be scheduled also straight from Facebook. Posts from the social media marketing plan should be scheduled as soon as there is content to post. On top of the scheduled posts there should be room for extempore posts, for example sudden news of the industry.

Table 5. Example of a social media marketing schedule

Week 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Instagram	Evento Awards	Quotation photo/article	Event industry news	Evento Awards	
Facebook	Article sneak peek	Evento Awards	Evento Awards	Article sneak peek	Quotation photo/article
Week 2	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Instagram	Evento Awards	Quotation photo/article	Quotation photo/article	Evento Awards	Magazine offer
Facebook	Article sneak peek	Evento Awards	Evento Awards	Article sneak peek	
Week 3	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Instagram	Evento Awards	Event industry news	Quotation photo/article	Evento Awards	
Facebook	Magazine offer	Evento Awards	Evento Awards	Article sneak peek	Quotation photo/article
Week 4	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Instagram	Evento Awards	Event industry news	Quotation photo/article	Evento Awards	
Facebook	Article sneak peek	Evento Awards	Evento Awards	Article sneak peek	Event industry news
Week 5	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Instagram	Evento Awards	Event industry news	Quotation photo/article	Evento Awards	Quotation photo/article
Facebook	Article sneak peek	Evento Awards	Evento Awards	Article sneak peek	

The above table 5 is a simple base for social media marketing. Based on this, posts should be scheduled on the decided scheduling tool. Having everything scheduled always at least a month beforehand would be ideal. Weekends are left out from the table 8 above, because the content is mainly business- or work related and suits better for weekdays. Content posted on weekend and on Fridays have not succeeded as well as weekday posts of the commissioning company.

## 5.10 Implementation and results

Among the thesis process the author has been executing the commissioning company's social media on Facebook and on Instagram. She has put theory into practice and has been developing the social media presence of the company. Other employees of the company have been executing the social media marketing as well.

Since August 2019, after the summer holidays, Evento's Facebook and Instagram accounts started to be more active and consistent. Still there has been several days in a row with no posts, mainly because of lack of time and other resources. Also, there has not been a real social media marketing strategy that all of the employees would follow and execute. Table 9 (attached in the end of this thesis as appendix 2) shows results of Evento's Instagram account from June and October 2019. In June the account had 9 posts in total, with an engagement rate of 1,1. In October there was 30 posts and an average engagement rate of 1,1. The engagement rate is counted by dividing the number of interactions (likes, shares and comments combined) with the total number of followers, and then multiplying it by 100 to get a decimal number. The engagement rate is interestingly the same in both months. The follower amount has raised from 900 to 1100, so this explains why the engagement rate has not raised. Engagement rate is an important rate to check, but finding the right posting rhythm, consistency and a loyal audience can take several months. Analysing the results and actions is extremely important especially in the beginning of a social media marketing process.

The author has joined events organized by Evento to post live especially on Instagram Stories. She has taken videos and photos from the events giving little sneak peeks of what is happening. The Stories have had approx. 150-200 views per Story. When there has been Stories on Instagram, there has been also more profile visits to Evento's Instagram account. This is obvious, as almost all Instagram users check the Stories and they are even easier and faster to watch than scrolling the whole feed. The Stories have also got good interaction (reactions, comments and shares) from the viewers. The author has also shared new magazine covers, competitions and other posts on the commissioning party's Instagram Stories. These all have raised the number of profile visits as well as interactions and followers.

The below figure 7 is an example of the results of one paid advertisement. With the paid advertising the post reached 531 persons over 4 days. 100 of the 531 persons reacted to the post somehow (by liking, commenting or clicking). The cost per engagement was 0,15 euros, which is relatively cheap marketing. The post was a Facebook competition, where

the price was a business book. The viewers could join the competition by commenting on the post. Competitions on Facebook are very efficient, as they reach a lot of people because the posts get so many comments and likes. This way friends of the commented persons see the competition on their Facebook feed, and might start following the page or comment the post as well.

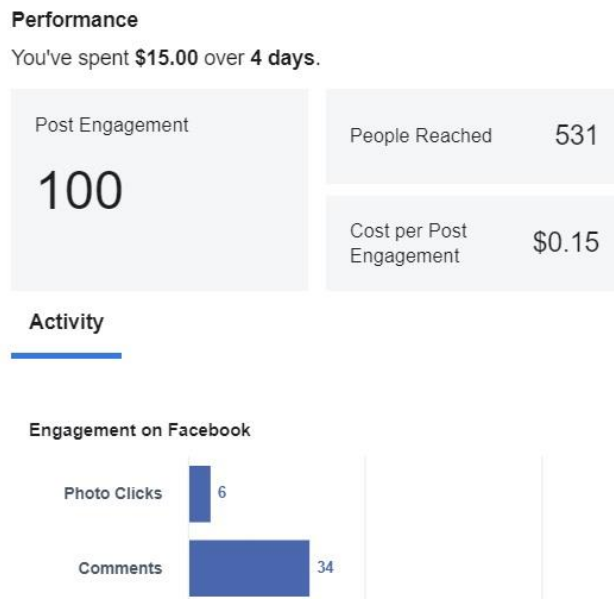


Figure 7. Paid Facebook advertising results (Evento's Facebook Insights)

The commissioning company's social media marketing is an on-going process and is always developing. Social media is a rapidly changing field and new channels and tools appear constantly. Trends and algorithm changes should be explored every month and possible changes made to the marketing strategy if needed.

### 5.11 The final product

The final product can be found in the end of this thesis as an appendix. The plan shows a strategy model how to build an efficient and consistent social media marketing presence. The other page, guidelines, shows specific tactics how to execute Evento's social media marketing. Brand elements, language, format, emojis and hashtags are clearly listed, so that every employee in the marketing team knows the rules. Guidelines for photos, posting times, stories- and live tools, tagging and paid advertising are also listed. The final product was done by using graphic-design tool Canva (Canva 2019). The first page, the strategy, represents an adapted version of the steps as proposed in the theory part (subchapter 4.1) of this thesis. The author wanted to include development in the end of the strategy, as

it is a crucial step of improving the social media success. The final product is easy to understand and to implement. Changes can be done to the strategy and guidelines when needed.

The final product gives simple and easy-to-execute guidelines of producing consistent social media marketing. The guidelines aim to produce on-brand content, that looks and sounds like Evento, and is aligned with the print magazine and other medias. The purpose of the plan is to build strong and consistent social media presence for Evento. For implementing the whole strategy in the future, the goals and other factors can be set more specifically.

## 6 Discussion

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, due to the big algorithm change in Facebook (subchapter 2.6), the number of followers is not the best metric when measuring the success of a social media page. Today social media success is more about the engagement and loyalty of the followers, how much comments and likes the posts are getting and is there any interaction with the followers. This thesis and the final product aimed to concentrate on making Evento's social media presence more interactive, engaging and consistent. The author wanted to include LinkedIn in the strategy as well, even though Evento is not active now in LinkedIn. For the future the author recommends the commissioning party to consider LinkedIn as one of their active social media channels, as LinkedIn is one of the best marketing channels especially for B2B companies.

Even though there is a formula (subchapter 2.9) to count social media ROI, counting it is challenging as succeeding in social media does not always mean direct conversions. As Lee (2014) argues, social media is most of all about branding, so one-to-one conversions can be very difficult to measure. Content marketing and branding makes calculating direct results increasingly hard, as conversions and sales don't go hand in hand with the time put in branding. The author did not count the social media ROI of the commissioning party, as there was not enough time for gathering enough data. With more time and other resources ROI could have been counted, but the author also sees social media more as branding and engagement, rather than direct sales.

For further development different kind of social media campaigns or post sets could be planned and executed. For example, every Tuesday there would be a "blast from the past", some significant event from the past. Old photos and fun facts create emotion and work well on social media. Introductions of the staff could be posted with an event related twist (for example what has been the employee's most important event in their lives). Different kind of post ideas could be brainstormed in groups to create unique ideas for social media. The author also recommends clearer responsibilities to be informed to the marketing team. When everybody has clear tasks and responsibilities, unnecessary work can be avoided and the work is more pleasant for everybody.

This thesis was originally started already in May 2019, when the thesis outline and plan were written. In the summer months of 2019, the author did a thorough literature research and shaped the structure of the planned thesis. After summer holidays in August the thesis process really started. Writing of the theoretical and empirical parts, as well as creating



the final product, took in total five months. Close operation with the commissioning company through the thesis process enabled easy and fast communication between the author and Evento. This made the project smooth. Evento supported the author with valuable information of the company. Gladly the author did not have any other courses during the fall of 2019, so she could concentrate only on work and the thesis.

Throughout autumn the author was working with Evento doing social media marketing for different channels. As Evento was still looking for their place and style in social media, the author got to be a part of creating the plan and the contents. This helped a lot with the thesis process, as the author got a better understanding and knowledge of the commissioning company's social media.

The author was confident from the beginning to do a product-oriented thesis. Before starting the thesis process the author was familiar with only a research thesis. During her studies product-oriented thesis option was not really presented in any way. This kind of thesis was clear and convenient for the author, as creating and producing things is much more relevant and pleasant to her, compared to researching. Nevertheless this thesis includes also literature research as well as research of the commissioning party.

The whole thesis process was a pleasant experience. During the thesis process the author worked as a freelance event coordinator and marketer for different companies, so this effected slightly the thesis schedule. Despite this the author finished the thesis in time and is confident with the final product. Working with other projects and events at the same time brought welcomed variation and change and might have even helped the whole writing project.

Co-operation with the commissioning party went smoothly over the process. The author worked independently but was regularly in touch with the company. Mostly new (one to four years old) literature and other sources was used as references, as the topic is relatively modern and developing rapidly. This meant a much narrower selection of literature about the topic. Gladly many of the best books were available in libraries in the summertime and beginning of autumn, so the author got to use the literature she wanted. Some older literature was used to explain key concepts and definitions. The author wanted to concentrate the most on Instagram, as it was the platform for the commissioning party that needed the most developing.

Setting deadlines for different parts of the thesis made the process easier. The author was able to concentrate on one part of the thesis at a time and had no rush with finalizing it.

The author learned time management, independence, academical writing, source re-search and co-operation skills during the thesis process. The author is pleased with the final product.

## 7 Conclusion

Impressive photos and regular posting on social media are not enough anymore, as algorithms have changed the game. Social media platform's, for example Facebook's algorithm, works in favour of their users, private profiles, so that they would spend as much time as possible on the specific platform. If companies are not aware of the algorithms, quality posts can easily drown in the feed, having a very small reach and visibility. When knowing the algorithms and keeping up with them, posts appear higher on the news feed and this way can get more likes, comments and shares. The number of followers is not the key metric. The final product focuses on creating a more customer-friendly social media, that gives extra value to the customers. After implementing parts of the plan to Evento's social media, engagement rates and interaction with the followers have increased. Evento's Facebook and Instagram feeds look more on-brand as well.

Businesses should aim to raise engagement, strong and lasting relationships with customers by interacting with them, and really being social on social media. Important questions and factors are being pondered when creating a social media marketing strategy. Goals, aims and messages must be clear for the social media to succeed. Often when doing social media marketing these factors are forgotten and there is no clear direction or reason. Therefore, a strategy and tactics must be set. The final product gives a simple guideline how to produce consistent and engaging social media marketing.

The final product makes the marketing process clearer and on-brand for the commissioning party. Already Facebook and Instagram pages of Evento look more consistent and on-brand, as the feed has now a more consistent rhythm and on-brand posts. Evento can use the plan in the future to implement consistent social media marketing. When changes need to be done to the strategy and guidelines, the product is easily adjustable. The author wants to point out that the social media marketing strategy and guidelines should be critically viewed every once in a while, because as mentioned earlier in this thesis, the field of digital marketing changes rapidly. New platforms are launched and trends born all the time, so the strategy should be adjusted when needed.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Social media marketing strategy for Evento

# SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING STRATEGY

evento



## 1 GOAL

- to raise number of interactions
- to produce more engaging content
- to raise number of followers



## 2 AUDIENCE

25-55 y.o. event industry professionals  
living in Finland



## 3 MESSAGE

"to offer inspiring and relevant event  
industry news and ideas to event  
professionals and future event creators"



## 4 PROCESS

- Consistent Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn marketing (feed, Story, live) based on the marketing schedule
- Interaction with followers



## 5 MEASUREMENT

- KPIs:
- number of interactions on posts
  - number of followers
- Results measured every month.



## 6 DEVELOPMENT

After measuring results, make changes to  
execute better social media marketing.

# SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES



## LANGUAGE

- Appropriate, yet inspiring language
- Prefer questions
- Proper relevant emojis
- Answer and like comments

## PHOTOS

- Prefer photos of people
- Bright and clear photos
- Photo credits



## POSTING



- Schedule FB & IG posts on Facebook
- FB: Max. 5 posts per day, prefer weekdays 08.00-18.00
- IG: Max. 1 post per day, prefer weekdays 08.00-11.00 or 18.00-20.00
- LinkedIn: one post per week, only on weekdays 08.00-16.00

## STORIES AND LIVE -TOOLS

- Use FB- & IG Stories and Live in events and other special occasions
- Use black or white "Strong" font
- Add relevant GIFs
- Tag relevant pages
- Reshare stories Evento is tagged to



## HASHTAGS AND TAGGING

- #eventolehti to every IG post
- 5-8 other relevant hahstags (on IG)
- Tag other pages to the post always when relevant (on FB and IG)

## PAID ADVERTISING

- Make paid ads of competitions, new magazine covers and relevant events
- Target to relevant people (demographics, job titles, hobbies, interests)
- Analyze results





## Appendix 2. Table 9, Instagram analysis June and October 2019

INSTAGRAM ANALYSIS - EVENTO, JUNE 2019				Followers:		930			
POST	Weekday	Likes	Comments	Engagement rate	Type of post	Emojis used	Hashtags	Questions	
Picture of the magazine	Monday	13	0	1,4	Reminder of the newest magazine	sun		1 yes	
Tapaus & Roof news	Thursday	13	0	1,4	News of the industry, article	-		3 no	
Bea -world contest	Friday	3	0	0,3	News of the industry, article	-		4 no	
News of Finnish ice hockey tea	Tuesday	12	0	1,29	News of the industry, article	ice hockey		5 no	
News of work wellbeing	Thursday	8	0	0,86	News of the industry, article	-		3 no	
News of the industry	Friday	5	0	0,54	News of the industry, article	-		1 no	
News of the hotel industry	Thursday	11	0	1,18	News of the industry, article	photo		3 no	
Picture of the magazine	Thursday	18	0	1,94	Reminder of the newest magazine	sun, flower		3 no	
News of the industry	Friday	6	0	0,65	News of the industry, article	-		5 no	
			Average:	1,1					
INSTAGRAM ANALYSIS - EVENTO, OCTOBER 2019				Followers:		1100			
POST	Weekday	Likes	Comments	Engagement rate	Type of post	Emojis used	Hashtags	Questions	
Evento Workshop	Thursday	12	1	1,2	Invitation to workshop	stars, dollar, arrow, star, confetti	9	yes	
Evento Awards started	Friday	16	2	1,6	Evento Awards	heart eyes, trophy, stars	6	yes	
New mag cover	Friday	23	0	2,1	Cover of new Evento	4 x stars, camera	9	no	
CC securitas	Friday	4	0	0,4	Commercial, News of the industry, article	-	0	no	
CC pãgã	Saturday	3	0	0,3	Commercial, News of the industry, article	-	0	no	
News of the industry	Monday	21	0	1,91	Quotation photo, 2 pages tagged	green symbol	6	no	
CC paasitorni	Tuesday	3	0	0,27	Commercial, News of the industry, article	-	0	no	
Evento Workshop	Tuesday	8	0	0,73	Invitation to workshop	3 x diamonds, fire	9	yes	
CC Sokos hotel	Wednesday	9	0	0,82	Commercial, News of the industry, article	-	0	no	
Evento Awards	Wednesday	19	0	1,73	Evento Awards	heart, stars, arrow	10	no	
Evento Workshop	Thursday	15	0	1,36	Evento Workshop	heart, stars	11	no	
Evento Awards	Friday	10	0	0,91	Evento Awards	3 x stars	7	yes	
News of the industry	Friday	11	0	1,00	Quotation photo, 2 pages tagged	camera	6	no	
Evento Awards	Monday	12	1	1,18	Evento Awards	stars, trophy, arrow	18	no	
CC Jurmala	Monday	5	0	0,45	Commercial, News of the industry, article	-	0	no	
News of the industry	Tuesday	14	0	1,27	Quotation photo, Woltti	camera, green symbol	6	no	
CC Meet Riga	Wednesday	4	0	0,36	Commercial, News of the industry, article	-	0	no	
Evento Awards	Wednesday	13	0	1,18	Evento Awards	stars, trophy	7	yes	
Evento Workshop	Thursday	12	0	1,09	Evento Workshop	stars	9	yes	
News of the industry	Friday	9	0	0,82	Quotation photo	camera, green symbol	5	no	
Evento Awards	Monday	21	0	1,91	Evento Awards, 5 pages tagged	stars	7	no	
CC Kulta Katriina	Tuesday	5	0	0,45	Commercial, News of the industry, article	camera	0	yes	
Evento Awards -stories	Wednesday	21	1	2,00	Evento Awards/MPI, 4 pages tagged	fire, green heart, biceps, arrow, stars	6	no	
Evento Workshop	Wednesday	7	0	0,64	Evento Workshop	diamonds, fire	9	no	
Evento Awards	Friday	9	0	0,82	Evento Awards, 1 page tagged	trophy, stars	8	no	
CC Kulta Katriina	Monday	3	0	0,27	Commercial, News of the industry, article	camera	0	yes	
Evento Awards	Tuesday	23	2	2,27	Evento Awards, 1 page tagged	star, arrow	7	no	
News of the industry	Tuesday	20	0	1,82	Quotation photo	diamond, camera	4	no	
CC Herkku	Wednesday	8	0	0,73	Commercial, News of the industry, article	no	0	no	
Evento Awards	Wednesday	16	0	1,45	Evento Awards	stars	8	no	
Evento Workshop	Thursday	18	0	1,64	Evento Workshop	stars, trophy	9	no	
			Average:	1,1					

### **Appendix 3. Interview questions**

- Which social media platforms are most valuable for Evento?
- Does Evento have resources or willingness to invest more time to social media marketing in the future? How much?
- Is there a content marketing plan created for Evento's social media?
- What Evento's readers are like?
- Who are Evento's biggest competitors?
- Do you use social media as a marketing tool in your events?
- What would you wish to achieve with Evento's social media marketing? What are the goals?
- Are you satisfied with Evento's social media at the moment? What should be developed?
- How do you develop Evento's social media? Do you analyze competitors, results etc.?
- Do you consider LinkedIn as a good platform for Evento to be active in?